

In 1794 he was about 34 years old, a citizen of Sheffield, in England, bookseller, printer and editor of a prosperous newspaper called the *Sheffield Register*, which had a large circulation in Yorkshire, Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire. We have a file of it in the State Library.

In its beginning the French Révolution was regarded as destined to bring great political blessings to France, and people in all nations hoped that the time had come for the lower classes to secure larger control in their governments. In England associations were formed, some, perhaps, ready to resort to force to secure political changes, but others seeking by educating the public mind to procure reform by constitutional methods.

One of the most flourishing of these latter peaceful associations was the Constitutional Society of Sheffield, of which Joseph Gales was Secretary. I have examined the editorials in the *Sheffield Register*, and there is certainly nothing in them looking towards treason or insurrection, only such deprecation of the horrors of war, and criticism of the policy of the Ministry as would be considered in our day respectful and mild. But rash and senseless riots in various parts of England, and the horror inspired by the atrocious excesses in France, induced Parliament to suspend the privileges of the writ of *habeas corpus*. Arbitrary arrests and imprisonment of the leading agitators for Parliamentary reform and against war with France were frequent.

Mr. Gales received notice that orders for his arrest had been or would be issued, and knowing that, as he was the only support of his family, his imprisonment meant absolute ruin, he concluded to leave the country, giving his reason in pathetic language in the issue of May 1, 1794. He took ship at Altona, in Denmark, selling his newspaper to the poet Montgomery. He was treated so kindly by those in Altona who sympathized with him in his political action, that he named a daughter after the city, a name which, abbreviated into "Alty," pronounced Aulty, is still a favorite with the family.

The members of the Constitutional Society of Sheffield, conscious of the rectitude of his purposes, adopted a series of resolutions laudatory of their emigrant Secretary, showing so much genuine feeling and beauty that I venture to quote them :